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GUS-0155

Copy 3 of 2

5 March 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR: Special Assistant for Technical Analysis,  
Development Projects Division

SUBJECT : Full Pressure Altitude Suit Assemblies for GUSTO

1. The current copy of AVIATION WEEK (2 March 1959) notes (on page 53) that Air Material Command has signed an unclassified contract with the David Clark Company, of Worcester, Massachusetts for:

"20 full-pressure altitude suit assemblies and various suit assembly components to be used to accomplish the required testing and integration into the X-15 research vehicle project, and also to accomplish testing which will enable the performance characteristics of the items obtained, (PR M4-9-RD-6155), \$238,625."

2. I am assuming that at some stage fairly early in the game, we will want to talk pressure suits with a manufacturer, in order to prepare compatible personal equipment in support of GUSTO. With the David Clark Company being our present suit manufacturer on CHALICE under conditions that have been wholly satisfactory over the past four years, and with the same company getting into the X-15 suit program, it has occurred to me that we might eventually be able to do the following things:

A. Obtain specifications and performance data on the X-15 suits as that program moves forward, probably through General Flickenger and/or Lt. Col. Marr, in order to guide our own thinking on this topic, or perhaps to shorten our own R & D time for full-pressure suit development, with attendant cost savings.

B. Tie our own pressure suit requirements into the X-15 program, in order to derive cover benefits therefrom, even if our suit ends up being different from or more complex than that developed for the X-15. I would suggest the possibility of even extending the present AMC contract, cited above, rather than writing a new contract which might be harder to connect with the X-15 effort than buying a piece of the one now in being.

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3. I do not believe that the present is too soon to consider a course of action such as I have proposed, though it is perhaps too early to commit funds thereto. If there is any way in which my office can assist in any of the suggested arrangements, I will be happy to do what I can.

SIGNED

**JAMES A. CHIDDERHAM, JR.**  
Chief, Administrative Branch  
DPD-DD/P

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